

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 STR-04 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6511

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, FR

SUBJ: POSSIBLE CHANGE IN FRENCH TAX CODE

REF: STATE 262731

1. FINMIN HAS TODAY INFORMED US THAT NOVEMBER 18-19 RPT 18-19 DATES WOULD BE SATISFACTORY FOR INITIAL EXPLORATORY DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING RENEGOTIATION OF U.S.-FRENCH INCOME TAX CONVENTION.

2. MINISTRY ASKED FOR NAMES OF PERSONS WHO WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS DISCUSSION ON AMERICAN SIDE AND WHAT AGENDA MIGHT BE. INDICATED THEY REGARD THIS FIRST DISCUSSION AS VERY PRELIMINARY ONE DESIGNED TO SKETCH OUTLINE OF AGENDA FOR SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS, WHICH WOULD PRESUMABLY BE PUT IN HANDS OF TAX EXPERTS.

3. ALSO TODAY ECONMIN DISCUSSED CONSIDERATIONS IN PARA THREE REFTEL WITH CONTACT IN ELYSEE AND ASKED HIS ADVICE ON HOW WE COULD BEST CONVEY TO POLICY LEVEL OUR CONCERN ABOUT TIMING RELATIONSHIP. CONTACT'S RESPONSE REVEALED THAT HE WAS FULLY INFORMED ON THIS SUBJECT, AND THAT THE POLICY LINE, HOWEVER COURTEOUSLY HE SPELLED IT OUT, WAS THAT THIS IS STRICTLY A MATTER OF INTERNAL FRENCH LEGISLATION WHICH THE FRENCH ARE GOING TO HANDLE THEIR WAY. MINISTRY OF FINANCE HAS BEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASKED TO LISTEN SYMPATHETICALLY TO ANY DOUBLE TAX

PROBLEMS AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY MAY HAVE, BUT THIS IS REGARDED AS TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT WHICH HAS NOW BEGUN TO TAKE ON POLITICAL OVERTONES MAKING IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE ITS POSITION BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

4. WOULD APPRECIATE ADVICE AS TO NAMES AND ANY WASHINGTON IDEAS AS TO TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER 18-19 MEETING. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER SUGGESTIONS WASHINGTON MAY HAVE ON TIMING QUESTION, WHICH WE INTEND CONTINUE TO PURSUE WITH MFA AND FINMIN.
RUSH

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